



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Riverside Arts Honoree Program expands to include Innovation Honorees

Riverside, California – On Tues, Jan 10, Riverside will announce the first Innovation Honoree of the Month at the City Council meeting at 6:30 p.m.

For eight years, the City of Riverside and Riverside Arts Council have presented the Arts Honoree of the Month Award. The honor was created to recognize the contribution that the arts make to the quality of life in the Riverside community, highlighting arts and cultural organizations and individuals that exhibit artistic excellence as well as service to the community. The City is modifying the Arts Honoree of the Month program by expanding it to now include Innovation Honorees.

“As a City of Arts & Innovation it’s important to recognize the integral linkage between creativity and economic development on the overall quality of life in a community. The expansion of the already successful Arts Honoree of the Month to include an Innovation Honoree better reflects our identity as a City of Arts & Innovation” said Mayor Ron Loveridge.

The first Innovation Honoree to be recognized is Amro Abanna, a long time contributor to Riverside’s tech and innovation endeavors including being a founding member of the High Technology Task Force Report, CEO Forum and a long time SmartRiverside board member. Mr. Abanna is instrumental in fostering start up technology companies in Riverside and created the Innovation Economy Corporation (IEC) as a one-stop shop approach. IEC is a creative way to harvest the best research at UCR and in the community and bring together the resources, people, and capital to incubate startup companies in technology, bio-medicine and environmental science.

One of the recent commercialization initiatives is a partnership with UCR where the IEC obtained the intellectual property (IP) and research and creating OLFactor Laboratories Inc. OLFactor research may be the next big breakthrough in fighting malaria, dengue fever, west Nile virus and other tropical disease around the world. Another majority owned subsidiary of IEC is Nano Engineering Applications, Inc or NEA. This company has created patent pending chemical and gas detection technology which was acquired by exclusive license from UCR, to serve a broad spectrum of industries.

“Riverside is proud to recognize the significant efforts of Mr. Amro Albanna in developing new businesses, keeping our graduates here and growing the economic development of our city and this region” concluded Mayor Loveridge.

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